

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A surface-modified nanoparticulate metal oxide, where the metal is chosen ~~from~~ from the group consisting of aluminum, cerium, iron, titanium, zinc and zirconium, wherein
  - a) the surface modification comprises a coating with polyasparaginic acid with a molecular weight  $M_w$  of from 1000 to 100 000, and
  - b) the metal oxide particles have an average primary particle diameter of from 5 to 10 000 nm.
2. (Previously Presented) The metal oxide according to claim 1, wherein it is surface-modified zinc oxide.
3. (Previously Presented) A method of producing a surface-modified nanoparticulate metal oxide, where the metal is chosen from the group consisting of aluminum, cerium, iron, titanium, zinc and zirconium, by
  - a. precipitation of the metal oxide from an aqueous solution of one of its metal salts,
  - b. separating off the precipitated metal oxide from the aqueous reaction mixture and
  - c. subsequent drying of the metal oxide,wherein the precipitation of the metal oxide in process step a. takes place in the presence of polyasparaginic acid.
4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 3, wherein the metal salts are metal halides, acetates, sulfates or nitrates.

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~one of claims~~ claim 3 ~~and 4~~, wherein the precipitation takes place in the presence of polyasparaginic acid with a molecular weight  $M_w$  of from 1000 to 100 000.
6. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~one of claims~~ claim 3 ~~to 5~~, wherein the precipitation takes place at a temperature in the range from 20°C to 100°C.
7. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~one of claims~~ claim 3 ~~to 6~~, wherein the precipitation takes place at a pH in the range from 3 to 12.
8. (Currently Amended) The method according to ~~one of claims~~ claim 3 ~~to 7~~ for producing surface-modified nanoparticulate zinc oxide.
9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the precipitation of the zinc oxide in process step a. takes place from an aqueous solution of zinc(II) chloride or zinc(II) nitrate at a temperature in the range from 25 to 40°C and a pH in the range from 7 to 11 in the presence of polyasparaginic acid with a molecular weight  $M_w$  of from 1000 to 7000.
10. (Currently Amended) The use of surface-modified nanoparticulate metal oxides defined according to ~~one of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 2~~ for producing cosmetic preparations.
11. (Previously Presented) The use according to claim 10 for producing cosmetic sunscreen preparations.
12. (Currently Amended) A cosmetic preparation comprising surface-modified nanoparticulate metal oxides defined according to ~~one of claims~~ claim 1 ~~to 2~~.
13. (Newly added) The method according to claim 4, wherein the precipitation takes place in the presence of polyasparaginic acid with a molecular weight  $M_w$  of from 1000 to 100 000.
14. (Newly added) The method according to claim 4, wherein the precipitation takes place at a temperature in the range from 20°C to 100°C.

15. (Newly added) The method according to claim 5, wherein the precipitation takes place at a temperature in the range from 20°C to 100°C.

16. (Newly added) The method according to claim 4, wherein the precipitation takes place at a pH in the range from 3 to 12.

17. (Newly added) The method according to claim 5, wherein the precipitation takes place at a pH in the range from 3 to 12.

18. (Newly added) The method according to claim 6, wherein the precipitation takes place at a pH in the range from 3 to 12.

19. (Newly added) The method according to claim 4 for producing surface-modified nanoparticulate zinc oxide.

20. (Newly added) The method according to claim 5 for producing surface-modified nanoparticulate zinc oxide.